



Tuesday, July 18, 2006  
Draft #2, Harper's article

(continued from draft #1)

Lessons from experience, mine and others':

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- 1) Don't wait to reveal documents that could change public awareness and possibly avert a catastrophe, until they have become history and the catastrophe is ongoing.
  - 2) Don't give them only to Congress, in secret; don't rely on a member or committee to take the political risk of making them public.
  - 3) Don't commit them to one paper only, with an assurance that you will wait indefinitely for publication without going to a competitor. (This may have happened with the revelations about the NSA warrantless wiretaps to the New York Times, which sat on them for a year, until spurred to publication by the prospect of separate publication in a book by their own reporter).



According to the sources in recent articles in the New Yorker by Seymour Hersh, who remain mostly anonymous, the president and his top advisors are secretly as determined to bring about regime change in Iran by military attack as they were in Iraq. Like Clarke, Beers, and others in the year and a half leading up to the invasion of Iraq, these sources and, according to them, many others in the know in the government, regard this prospective policy as catastrophic. They were right to share their concerns with the public through Hersh. But that has, somewhat surprisingly, failed to affect significantly public awareness of the likelihood or dangers of the impending new war. There remains the possibility for one or more of these sources of doing what no one has done in the last

thirty years, no one ever in a truly timely way: going beyond anonymous leaks, unsupported by documents, to full public testimony corroborated by contemporary documents—memos, estimates, internal critiques, cables, e-mail, directives, staffwork (minus any pages or passages whose revelation would endanger lives or clearly impinge on national security, including intelligence sources and methods)—that would provide a comprehensive, unchallengeable picture of a policy process directly at odds with public statements, including consideration of internally controversial and potentially disastrous “options” such as nuclear attack.

[or rather] What these sources have revealed to Hersh is a situation unhappily familiar to an insider like me during the approach to the Vietnam war, and to those like Clarke who watched our political system manipulated to accept the invasion of Iraq. With little challenge from the press or Congress, a cover story has been promulgated about an “intolerable” threat that supposedly justifies a massive preventive attack, actually desired for a variety of quite other reasons, which, by any objective standards, are wildly disproportionate to the costs, dangers and actual prospects of the policy.

[This administration not only seeks, again, with respect to international law, to use illegal means to an illegal end; it proposes and is working to change the norms and processes of our government so as to free this president and his successors from any constitutional, legal or institutional constraints that would keep them from doing the same again and again. What is underway amounts to an effort to change our government to a monarchical form suited to running a world empire.]

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[THIS SECTION IS PROBABLY TOO LONG FOR THIS PIECE, except perhaps for brief allusions to past leaks that could have been made with effect:

Such crises have existed in the past (sometimes less obviously than at present). In my own experience:

the imminent escalation of the war in 1964-65.

The hidden threat to our freedoms in 1967., as LBJ found himself mired in stalemate and confronting resistance both with respect to the war and to civil liberties; he unleashed the CIA—Operation CHAOS—FBI—COINTELPRO-- NSA—Operation Minaret—and Army intelligence-- illegally against American citizens, in effect deputizing these agencies as secret police. At the same time, he inaugurated planning for martial law (“martial rule”) in case of civil disturbance: Garden Plot planning, and Cable Splicer exercises (continued and expanded under Nixon and subsequent administrations, especially Reagan). (Neither I, nor anyone else except certain government insiders, knew anything of this at the time, till the Church Committee investigations in 1975-76).

Imminent escalation, leading toward mobilization, invasion of North Vietnam, and probable nuclear war with China, in March, 1968. (This I knew, and leaked to avert).

Imminent escalation in fall 1969, with nuclear threats. (Secret from me and MHH, though we knew of probable later escalation, which led me to leak the PP.)

The Huston Plan against civil liberties in spring 1970 (after a year of warrantless wiretaps of journalists and NSC officials by the FBI for the White House). All the expanded operations under the Patriot Act, and (perhaps) more: including letter-opening, use of CIA and NSA, sneak-and-peek black bag jobs;...blocked formally by Hoover, but probably implemented, in part by the White House after the PP were released.

Build-up of a White House covert operations capability in 1971-72: bypassing FBI and CIA. (Were CHAOS, Minaret, Army intelligence, or COINTELPRO curtailed at all under Nixon?! Or was it that these were simply not uncovered during Watergate, or until the Church and Pike investigations in 1975-76?)

Imminent, and implemented, expansion of the war in 1970, 1971, and 1972 (and planned resumption of bombing in 1973). Consideration of nuclear war in 1972, and if necessary after 1973.

Contemplated postponement of elections, with state of emergency, in 1972 (after assassination of Agnew), if an independent run by Wallace threatened Nixon's defeat. Possibly, a White House instigated or “permitted” assault on Wallace.

Possible nuclear war over Iran under Carter in 1980.

Iran-contraGate.

Plans for massive detention and suspension of Constitution in case of US attacks on El Salvador or Nicaragua. (North) 1986?

Possible use of nuclear weapons in Gulf War.

Possible Administration complicity in 9-11; still speculative, but deserving of investigation, so far averted by the Administration.

Conspiracy to commit aggression against Iraq, early 2001 to March, 2003.

EARLIER: All the secret or overt threats of nuclear first-use.]



NOW: a convergence of crises, external and domestic, based on Administration

Plans to occupy and wage war in Iraq indefinitely; with larger troop levels, made possible by a draft, after another 9-11 or war with Iran.

Plans to attack Iran, possibly escalating to nuclear weapons.

Plans to roll back the Constitution and Bill of Rights, effectively instituting “wartime” dictatorship (or monarchy) indefinitely: a pre-1776/1789 mentality (pre-Magna Carta?)  
Steady progress toward this since 9-11, but plans to implement a police state after 9-11-II (or war with Iran).

To put a spoke in this “juggernaut” (of movement toward war with Iran, in the words of a government official to Sy Hersh: but it also applies to the Bush war on our liberties), it is essential:

To vote in a Democratic majority in the House (and preferably, in the Senate as well) in November, 2006;

And to build a public demand for a Democratic leadership and majority to conduct vigorous investigations and hearings: pointing toward **impeachment** of officials (Rumsfeld, Cheney, Gonzales: Bush); rollback of illegal and unconstitutional policies and practices (NSA warrantless taps and mass surveillance; torture; rendition; Guantanamo; support for death squads); and avert martial law and mass detention in US; avert Official Secrets Act, roll-back moves toward greater secrecy and against leaks; act on global warming; **AVERT WAR ON IRAN, use of nuclears in Iran, and resumption of nuclear testing; bring about withdrawal from Iraq (perhaps least likely!).**

Create public support for Democratic presidential and other candidates to back these policies in 2007-2008 and to implement them in office.

For all these objectives, the secrecy system is a major obstacle (along with current Democratic passivity and complicity: which presents us, in effect, with a system of a single party with two right wings, one being run by the far right).

The best prospect for bringing about these changes—probably **essential** to achieving them—is **major disclosures, leaks, by insiders**, which dramatically undermine the legitimacy of present policies and leadership, and refute spurious prospects of their ultimate success. This is the reason for my appeals above, in the current crisis.

Thus I believe that dissenters to present policies who are currently government insiders have a **crucial** role to play in saving many American lives—both military and civilians at home—along with the lives of Iraqi and Iranian civilians, and with preserving our liberties and our democracy. I want to make them aware that there is a better alternative course for them—when they find that their urgent dissent within internal channels is overruled, ignored and ineffective-- than either to keep their silence along with their jobs, or to resign silently, without making public their dissent and the reasons for it. The “third way,” the better way, is to expose, to reveal the truth, outside their bureaucracy, to the public and Congress and courts. To make unauthorized disclosures: comprehensively enough, with enough **documentation** and corroboration, to make their disclosures sufficiently credible, indeed irrefutable, to be genuinely effective politically.

To make the obvious personal risks of doing this look worthwhile (as I believe they are, from my personal experience, observation and study), I will give examples of: (a) the costs to lives and the country of **not** doing this in the past: the “silence of the doves” in Vietnam; the **failure** of myself and others to disclose crucial truths during Vietnam or later, at a time when it might have made a great difference; the failure of dissenters from Bush’s policies—even those who did reveal both their dissent and the hidden truths eventually, in memoirs or interviews—to do this in a timely way, or with documents, at great cost to the nation.

(b) cases where timely leaks did have a great effect (mainly, March 1968; including leaks of nuclear plans, not by me); (see leaks to Woodward and Bernstein, Deep Throat; but especially, Dean disclosures, under pressure: imagine them earlier! and where mass mobilizations (fall 1969, spring 1970) unwittingly prevented major escalation. (Latter is different: might be omitted here: once again, as in my book!) (See MHH leaks to me; and effect of CD on me). Note civil disobedience by press in publishing PP in 1971! And effect of **prospect** of leaks on Nixon administration, AND on Bush in 2003 (Wilson). (Again, I don’t know if I’ll cover this in Harper’s piece.)

c) Cases where timely revelations COULD have had a crucial effect (in contrast to periods when leaks were less likely to be effective: 1966): me or others in 1964-65 (doves, including JTM); McNamara in 1967! (or late 1965, early 1966; Fulbright hearings; Fulbright hearings 1968! 1972, Haiphong? (my appeal to him and Bundy) (note his insider role in 1966-67, holding down JCS); Democrats in 1969 (my appeal to Warnke, Bolte, ELK, Vance, McPherson) if combined with PP AND with MHH et al revelations...; 1970 Cambodia? —press toward real negotiations (1967 or 1968; 1971 McGovern “diplomacy” (which DRV weren’t ready to cooperate in...).

But especially: 2001-2003: Bush insiders. Clarke, Scheuer, Rand Beers, O’Neill, Wilkerson, Pilar. (See Ray McGovern; **talk to Ann Wright**); **Thielman, . UK: DSM; Goldsmith;**

**Also:** those who did leak, **belatedly, orally, anonymously, in fragmentary way without documents:** to Risen, on NSA taps; Yoo memos; torture; rendition; secret CIA camps; State Department plans for post-invasion; (see our “12 documents to be leaked”);

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now, “weapons free zones”; policies behind Haditha, Falluja, Ramadi; our support for Shia death squads; (PAST CONTEXT: Phoenix, My Lai, Thanh Phong, Tiger Force, torture.) Plans for attack on Iran and nucs (sources to Giraldis, and to Hersh, and to Bill Arkin.

[925 words, this section, starting NOW]